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BOOK REVIEWS

The Diplomacy of the War of 1914. The Beginnings of the War.

By ELLERY C. STOWELL, Assistant Professor of International Law at Columbia University. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. xxii, 728.)

Closely following the opening scenes of the present European struggle there began a steady bombardment by the belligerents of innocent neutrals and noncombatants by means of white, blue, orange, and other multi-colored papers. A considerable section of the American public, consisting more especially of those unfortunates who had attained into the doubtful distinction of incorporation into "Who's Who," was fairly deluged with these inspired pamphlets containing what purported to be explanations of the true motives of the various belligerents for entering the war.

Of course, a thorough investigation of the causes of this war would take us far beyond a study of these or any other official set of documents. The causes of war are in part psychological and in part social, economic, or political. They have their root in human nature—in the passions, aversions and appetites of mankind; and in the economic, social or political conditions under which men live and struggle for the means of existence and enjoyment.

The real student of the causes of war should probably begin with a study of human nature in its evolutionary and contemporary aspects and of national characteristics as manifested in the past and present. He should also study institutions and social and economic conditions by the comparative and historical methods; the development and policies of human groups in their intergroupal relations; and, finally, the documentary evidence of various kinds bearing upon the issues of peace and war. Amongst these documents, the study of diplomatic correspondence must by no means be neglected, though it is doubtful whether it should rank first.

In his history of the Hannibalic or Second Carthaginian War, Polybius distinguishes between the real or fundamental causes of the struggle and the overt acts or events leading up to that great conflict. He

remarks that we should look for *real causes* in the "motives which suggested such action and the policy which dictated it."

For the discovery of such policies and motives for action the study of diplomatic correspondence would be particularly valuable were it not for the fact that much of this correspondence aims to conceal rather than to reveal truth. It is therefore often necessary to read between the lines—a task always difficult and sometimes hazardous.

Among the works which aim to correlate and interpret the vast mass of diplomatic correspondence immediately preceding this war, Mr. Stowell's book will always occupy an honored and important place. It is written in an honest, sincere, and impartial spirit and from a detached neutral point of view which makes its findings against the Central Teutonic Powers all the more final and effective. In this respect it contrasts favorably with such a book as Beck's *Evidence of the Case* which, however, is more readable and incisive.

The strongest portions of the book are those dealing with the analysis and interpretations of the documents themselves and in their judicious selection and arrangement.

The reviewer agrees with the author that "the piecing together of the documentary evidence under logically arranged headings will be of value to all those with an interest in international affairs, since the perusal of the documents themselves to get at the gist of the material requires a considerable expenditure of time on the part of even an experienced diplomatist To facilitate comparison with the original source, in each case the reference has been placed in parentheses immediately after the extract" (Preface).

The weakest part of the volume is the historic background given in the first chapter, not because of any inaccuracies or lack of knowledge displayed, but because of its inadequacy of treatment. More particularly does there seem to be a failure to appreciate the importance of the challenge to British sea power involved in the German naval program of 1900 and its execution during succeeding years. Nor does there appear to be any recognition of the importance of the effects of the Pan-Germanic propaganda, or of German dreams of exploitation in the Asiatic portions of the Ottoman Empire.

Particularly interesting and important are the author's conclusions which are contained in the last or eleventh chapter. Among the causes of the war, he emphasizes the disturbance of the balance of power involved in its effect upon the German mind of the formation of the Triple Entente, the rivalry of Austria and Russia for the maintenance

or extension of their power in the Balkans, and the invasion of Belgium which definitely brought England into the war.

For the actual outbreak of war he blames Germany most (for risking the peace of Europe in a campaign after prestige), Austria next (for precipitating the conflict), and Russia least (for her general mobilization under great provocation at a time when there was still a possibility of mediation or negotiation). Belgium is given a clean bill of health. Especial attention should be called to the masterly defence of Earl Grey's diplomacy in the long note on pp. 354-359.

In addition to an excellent index, list of questions and answers, chronology, and list of citations, this admirable volume also contains 134 pages of valuable documents beginning with Washington's Farewell Address and ending with a letter by Dr. Dernburg in answer to Dr. Eliot.

On the whole, the book takes rank with Headlam's *History of Twelve Days* as one of the two (or possibly three) best books hitherto produced on the diplomacy of the war.

AMOS S. HERSHAY.

American Diplomacy. By CARL RUSSELL FISH, Ph.D., Professor of American History, University of Wisconsin. (New York: Henry Holt and Company. 1915. Pp. 541.)

The writer of diplomatic history is confronted at the outset with the question of method of treatment of his subject—whether it shall be wholly chronological or whether it shall be topical. The one method affords the more comprehensive survey of historical facts, the other gives a clearer comprehension of the motives and results of diplomatic action. As might be expected from one writing a book for classes in history Professor Fish has chosen to employ the strictly chronological method of treating American diplomacy. The advantage of this treatment is offset by the disconnected and necessarily meager account accorded to many of the most important diplomatic questions.

The chronological method imposes a great burden upon the reader in requiring him to carry a number of incomplete topics through half a dozen chapters with merely a paragraph in each chapter concerning a given topic. It is not conducive to a clear understanding of the Newfoundland fisheries dispute for example to be obliged to follow the diplomacy connected therewith through pages so scattered as the following, 1, 2, 43, 45, 48, 182, 183, 192, 193, 285, 346, 348, 352, 375,